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ABSTRACT

The Dallas County Community College District, in conjunction with Amarillo College, has been charged with establishing a task force to develop a comprehensive plan of educational alternatives for senior citizens in the State of Texas. This paper is a report on the subsequent proposals made by this task force. Using the goals of the Educational Report of the 1971 White House Conference on Aging, the main objective of the present plan is to provide senior citizens with meaningful learning experiences which will help them enjoy life. After an analysis of continuing education programs in Texas and other states and of demographic characteristics the following proposals are made: (1) that courses directed toward the elderly be administered by schools of continuing education; (2) that a full time director and coordinator of the proposed program be designated; (3) that a Senior Advisory Council be created; (4) that any community service course in any area for which there may be a demand be offered; (5) that the identification and securing of instructors be the responsibility of the Program Director; and (6) that the cost of these proposed activities be funded in a manner similar to Adult Vocational Education provided by the Texas Education Agency. (RWP)

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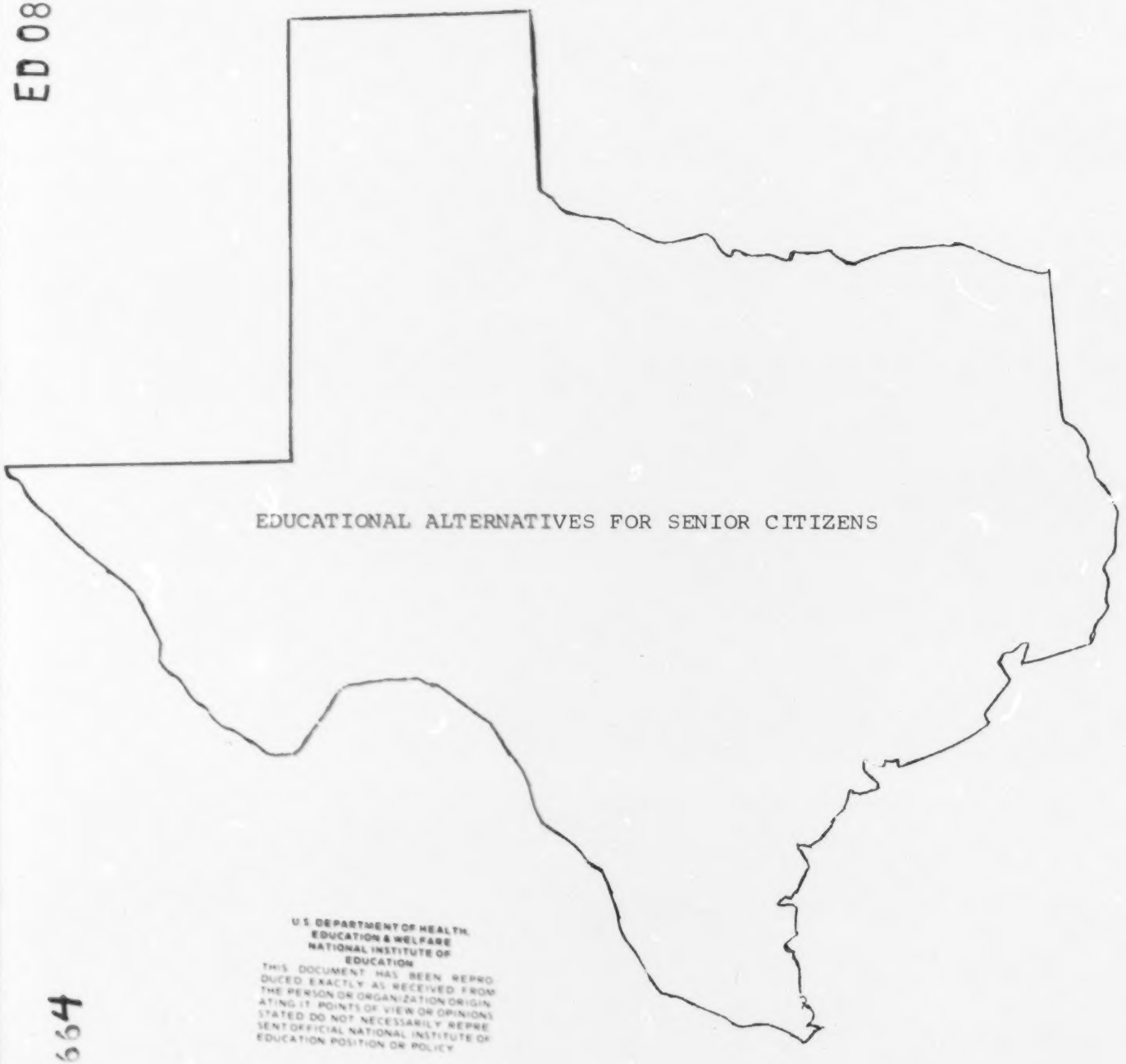

EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

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EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVES FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

PROPOSED SUB-PROJECT FOR FUNDING UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF TITLE I, HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

The Dallas County Community College District in conjunction with Amarillo College has been charged with developing a comprehensive plan of educational alternatives for senior citizens in the state of Texas. (Dallas County was designated by the Administration on Aging and the Governor's Committee on Aging as one of two state target areas for the involvement of the Federal Regional Inter Agency Committee on Aging to meet the needs of the elderly.)

In doing so, we have attempted to gain insight into specific urban problems currently affecting our elderly population. Demographic data, service assessments, and questionnaire findings all indicate that there exists a great need and desire for learning on a continuing basis.

In discussing education for aging, it is significant to note that education for the elderly is based upon two important premises. These being:

Premise #1:

Education for aging will lead to something better in the lives of those people participating.

Premise #2:

Older persons are capable of a constructive response to educational stimulation.*

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*Data as listed in keynote address: Education and Aging by Dr. Howard Y. McClusky (University of Michigan).

Therefore, because of this faith displayed in the learning ability of senior citizens, education in the field of aging may be viewed as an attractive investment to all persons involved in its operation.*

In our present society, emphasis on lifetime learning takes on tremendous weight. By continuing education in all aspects of life (particularly among our older generation), one has a chance to cope with the battle for survival.

Institutions involved in providing life-long learning experiences for the elderly, must be prepared to respond to a variety of elderly needs. For the most part, the elderly population has been a neglected and forgotten priority of the educational institution. Research gathered in this study indicates that there is a real need for learning programs for the elderly. Senior citizens responded positively to questionnaires concerning learning needs and preferences. Educational institutions, especially public institutions have a responsibility to serve the total community and this includes the older community as well (60 years and older).

In serving the elderly, environmental needs as well as those which stress physical well-being should be met. Environmental needs which include housing, personal safety and legal protection are areas of great concern to the old. In discussing those needs which stress physical well-being, factors such as income, nutrition and health should be taken into consideration. By participating in learning experiences, elderly citizens will become mentally aware of the issues at hand and

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*Op.cit.

will be better prepared to cope with problems created by environmental factors or those resulting from the expressed need for physical well-being.

In addition to the above, the need for psychological, social and spiritual well-being exists. It is a cold fact that many senior citizens are basically very lonely people - their friends have passed away, and they are bored at home. In general, senior citizens are in great need for some form of stimulation.

Senior citizens find that what they want most out of life is to have a friend and to have a place where they are still considered important. Many elderly persons find that they have plenty of time on their hands with nothing to do.

One should bear in mind that when a person retires from his career, he experiences relief from the daily life routine. In fact, he now finds that he has plenty of leisure time but not as much money for play. Consequently the retired person now realizes that he loses (3) things:

1. Loss of the "work" status which brought respect and admiration from his fellow workers and/or his family
2. Loss of the daily companionship of others who shared similar experiences and problems
3. Loss of work itself which results in lowered income of self or spouse.*

A comprehensive plan of educational alternatives would provide the retiree with new roles which will replace those lost. Futhermore, the proposed plan: Educational Alternatives for Senior Citizens

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*Data as listed in a research study conducted by the Dallas Agency on Aging (2/15/73).

will meet the need for psychological, social and spiritual well-being by providing retired persons with chances to develop companionship and alternatives for idleness such as training, outlets for creativity, exposure to the larger community, and opportunities for community service.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the proposed plan for continuing education of the elderly is to provide senior citizens with meaningful learning experiences which will help them cope with and enjoy life.

In addition, it is felt that the plan for continuing education of the elderly include as its objectives, the goals laid down in the EDUCATION REPORT of the 1971 WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING:

1. To help older people grow in the fulfillment of their potential, thus assuring them the means of attaining a self-respecting level of well-being, freedom to cultivate a good life, and freedom to develop a partnership role in promoting the welfare of society.

2. To assist older people in developing the abilities uniquely available in the later years (e.g., wisdom and contributive abilities), and to assist the society in utilizing the abilities so developed.

3. To help older people serve as models of lifelong fulfillment for emulation and for the guidance of oncoming generations.

4. To create a climate of acceptance by both older persons and the society of the desirability, legitimacy, and feasibility of the preceding goals.

5. To help society understand the need and provide the support

for quality learning for everyone of all ages as a continuing opportunity in lifelong learning.

6. To provide pre-retirement education so that older people will be better prepared to meet special needs such as their needs for mental and physical health, for adequate income, for adequate housing, for satisfying relationships with the immediate and extended family, and for making wise use of leisure time.

7. To make special provisions for delivering educational programs to hidden populations of older people, usually nonparticipant and isolated from the mainstream of community services.

DISCUSSION

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

State of Texas:

In assessing elderly needs within the state of Texas, an analysis of demographic characteristics is necessary. At present, Texas has an overall population figure of 11,196,730 residents.

According to the 1970 Census information, the elderly population of persons living in the state aged 60 and over is 1,438,348. Racial composition is presented in the following manner:

A. Non-Minority Groups - 1,131,658 persons (60+)

B. Negroes - 161, 137 persons aged 60+

C. Spanish Language - 143,221 persons (60+)

D. American Indians - 1224 persons (60+)

E. Orientals - 1108 persons (60+)

Urban versus rural distribution indicates that Texas' total population was 80% urban in 1970 as compared with 75% in 1960. There-

fore since movement into metropolitan areas is indicated, demographic breakdowns should be made in reference to those urban areas containing the highest percentages of elderly persons. Table 1 illustrates clearly the demographic characteristics of (5) urban areas. These being Harris, Dallas, Bexar, Tarrant and McLennan counties. (Four of these counties contain the most populous Standard Metropolitan areas in Texas - Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Fort Worth.

TABLE 1. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS IN 5 URBAN AREAS*

COUNTIES	# of Persons Aged 65+	% Of 65+ in Rural Areas	% Of 65+ Black	% Of 65+ Mex.Am.	% Of 65+ Instit.	% of 65+ Indep.	% Of 65+ B.P.L.	% Of Pop. 65+
Harris	102,341	3.4	18.2	5.2	4.2	25.8	24.8	5.9
Dallas	88,237	1.0	12.7	2.9	4.4	26.2	24.2	6.6
Bexar	62,416	5.2	6.9	30.7	4.4	25.6	29.2	7.5
Tarrant	52,148	3.7	10.4	2.1	5.7	26.5	26.3	7.3
McLennan	18,237	21.0	13.9	3.2	6.8	27.2	39.0	12.4

Definitions: Instit.-Institutionalized B.P.L.-Below Poverty Level
Indep.-Independent Pop.-Population

In viewing Table 1, certain factors should be emphasized. For example, Harris County contains the highest overall number of persons aged 65 and over (102,341) whereas McLennan County is in contrast by maintaining a high percentage of persons living within defined rural areas (21%). In addition, McLennan County not only possesses a high percentage of elderly persons living below the poverty level (39%), but it designates 12.4% of its' total population as being elderly.

Bexar County is prominent in that it has the highest concentration of Mexican-American elderly in the state of Texas (30.7%)

These factors are of significance in that they indicate priority

*All data reflected in Table 1 was derived from the 2nd. & 4th. count of the 1970 Census Summary Tapes.

areas and provide the directions which must be taken into consideration when planning and coordinating services for the elderly.

The 4th. and 6th. count of the 1970 census divides the state total elderly population of persons aged 65 and over into male and female breakdowns. Out of a total population of 993,165, there are approximately 419,035 males and 574,130 females. In addition, statistics further divide these figures into the following breakdowns:

Urban Areas		
Males	Females	Total
287,120	427,524	714,644

Rural Non-Farm Areas		
Males	Females	Total
102,040	120,602	222,642

Rural Farm Areas		
Males	Females	Total
29,875	26,004	55,879
419,035	574,130	993,165

It is apparent that the number of females exceeds the number of males by 155,095 persons. (Hence, female needs and interests should be taken into consideration when designing the program format offered to senior citizens.)

In analyzing demographic characteristics of Texas, income distribution is most essential. Table 2 reflects the elderly income of those persons aged 65 and over living in the state according to sex and area location.

The purpose of this table is to define the number of elderly persons living within the state with varied yearly incomes ranging from no income

TABLE 2. INCOME BREAKDOWN OF ELDERLY PERSONS (AGED 65 & OVER) IN THE STATE OF TEXAS ACCORDING TO SEX AND AREA LOCATION*

TOTAL P	TOTAL	$1-$999	$1,000-1999	$2000-$2999	$3000-$39999	$4000-$4999	$5000-$5999	$6000-$6999	$7000-$7999	$8000-$9999	$10000 $14999	$15000 OR MORE
419,035	407,032	59,659	117,925	72,025	43,945	24,812	17,717	13,712	10,981	13,787	16,605	15,864
574,130	495,565	188,655	180,113	51,790	24,917	13,664	9,183	6,958	4,926	5,784	5,471	4,104
993,165	902,597	248,314	298,038	123,815	68,862	38,476	26,900	20,670	15,907	19,571	22,076	19,968
287,120	277,991	36,471	74,248	47,723	31,302	18,111	13,123	10,575	8,726	11,011	13,340	13,361
427,524	372,311	129,259	136,373	42,193	20,784	11,794	8,000	6,000	4,317	5,085	4,757	3,749
714,644	650,302	165,730	210,621	89,916	52,086	29,905	21,123	16,575	13,043	16,096	18,097	17,110
102,040	99,616	19,020	36,306	18,492	9,048	4,668	3,108	2,081	1,485	1,901	2,023	1,484
120,602	102,914	47,887	38,643	8,191	3,374	1,429	875	711	442	576	520	266
222,642	202,530	66,907	79,949	26,683	12,422	6,097	3,983	2,792	1,927	2,477	2,543	1,750
29,875	29,425	4,168	7,371	5,810	3,595	2,033	1,486	1,056	770	875	1,242	1,019
26,004	20,340	11,509	5,097	1,406	759	441	308	247	167	123	194	89
55,879	49,765	15,677	12,468	7,216	4,354	2,474	1,794	1,303	937	998	1,436	1,108

Note: Table 2 reflects a yearly income breakdown.

DEFINITIONS:

TEX- Texas State Total
M- Male
F- Female
T- Total
URB- Urban Areas
RNF- Rural Non-Farm Areas
RFA- Rural Farm Areas

TOTAL P- Total persons including those persons without incomes

* Data taken from:
1970 Census of Population - "Detailed Characteristics" Texas, Section 2
Table 193, pg 2088-2090.

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993,165	902,597	248,314	298,038	123,815	68,862	38,476	26,900	20,670	15,907	19,571	22,076	19,968
287,120	277,991	36,471	74,248	47,723	31,302	18,111	13,123	10,575	8,726	11,011	13,340	13,361
427,524	372,311	129,259	136,373	42,193	20,784	11,794	8,000	6,000	4,317	5,085	4,757	3,749
714,644	650,302	165,730	210,621	89,916	52,086	29,905	21,123	16,575	13,043	16,096	18,097	17,110
102,040	99,616	19,020	36,206	18,492	9,048	4,668	3,108	2,081	1,485	1,901	2,023	1,484
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at all to $15,000 or more per year.

Statistics reveal that the majority of elderly persons (298,038) have low yearly incomes ranging between $1,000 to $1,999. Futhermore, those elderly persons living in Rural Farm Areas have the lowest income distribution rate of the three area locations.

In conclusion, Table 2 indicates the financial status of elderly Texans; in relation to the proposed plan for continuing education, it gives indication as to the number of elderly persons financially able to pay for educational services.

Dallas County:

A description of the geographic distribution of the aged population in Dallas County is necessary for determining existing services, needs, and planning for future educational services to the aged.

The 1970 Census information breaks the demographic analysis of Dallas County into four parts: racial distribution; male to female ratio; income; and isolation.

Dallas County is divided into 24 communities and the city of Dallas into 17. At present, there are approximately 88,237 persons aged 65 and over living within the county. (This over 65 population represents 6.6% of the total population of Dallas County.) In 1950 the number of persons over 65 in D.C. was 36,146; in 1960 the figure was 61,112 and in 1980 the projected number is 133,178.* (Here it is significant

*Population Projection Model, Dallas City Dept. of Planning and Urban Development.

to note that not only is the total number of persons over 65 increasing, but also the proportion of the population over 65.)

Within Dallas County the city of Dallas has the highest number of aged 66,284 representing 75% of the total over 65 population. Other communities in D.C. which have high percentages of elderly persons over 65 are as listed: Highland Park-19%; University Park-17%; Seagoville and Rowlett-11%; Lancaster-8%; etc...**

In Dallas County, the racial composition of the elderly population is primarily white. The white population accounts for 84% (74,243); Blacks-13%(11,466); and the Mexican-Americans make up approximately 3%(2,528). Male to Female ratio in Dallas County is 63 males to 100 females, and this includes 62%(54,271) of the females over 65 and 39%(39,966) males.

The number of isolated individuals (persons living alone or with non-relatives)is approximately 32,375 - This figure represents 31% of the total aged population. The racial breakdown of persons alone is 27,348 (85%)-white; 4,599 (14%)-Black; and 468 (1%)-Mexican American.

In relation to demographic characteristics, the total aged population is a most influential segment of the total population in Texas. Senior citizens do contribute much to society and maintain high voting records.

Table 3 reflects a study conducted for the purpose of determining whether senior citizens in Dallas County are represented in voting elections. Voting precincts containing those census tracts with the

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**Data obtained from research study conducted by: Chan Carman, Former research associate for the Dallas Agency on Aging.

highest numbers of elderly persons (aged 65 & Over) were observed. Data was taken from the General Election Returns (November 7, 1972) of the Precinct Vote Turnout Report.

Table 3. Voting Record of Persons 65 & Over in Dallas County*

Number of Persons 65 & Over	Total # of Registered Voters	Absentee Vote	Imprecinct Vote	Total	%
1-99	33,709	2035	24,720	26,755	79%
100-399	43,796	2260	32,488	34,748	79%
400-699	37,797	2416	27,512	29,928	79%
700-999	34,946	1244	22,676	23,920	68%
1000+	42,002	3616	29,864	33,480	80%
Totals	192,250	11,571	137,260	148,831	77%

In those voting precincts containing few elderly, election returns indicated that approximately 79% of the voters registered voted. On the otherhand in those precincts containing high numbers of elderly persons, there was also a high percentage of persons who voted. However the highest percentage of voting came from those precincts containing the largest number of elderly persons. (80%) Therefore this study supported the fact that the elderly population living within Dallas County is a responsible group of people who do possess pride and interest in state and national events.

From the evidence reflected in the Precinct Vote Turnout Report, it can be concluded that the elderly segment of the population in Dallas County is most influential in determining the outcome of elections.

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*Data taken from the General Election Returns (November 7, 1972) Precinct Vote Turnout Report.

The Relationship of Transportation to Plans for Continuing Education of the Elderly

In discussing the proposed plans for continuing education of the elderly, transportation services (both urban and rural) within the state of Texas should be fully evaluated.

For example in Dallas County, there are three main agencies which provide significant transportation to elderly persons. These are the Dallas Transit System, the American Red Cross, and Crossroads Community Center. During July, 1973 these agencies were asked to provide statistical information on the use of transportation by senior citizens aged 60 and over. From this information, four main generalizations can be made:

1. Most transportation is available only in the city of Dallas, not in the county.
2. Special needs for transportation are most often related to the need for medical care.
3. The need for transportation exceeds the sources significantly.
4. The need for transportation for the elderly is recognized by the agencies surveyed, and an interest in methods to improve service is evident.

In addition the services rendered by the Dallas Transit System are numerous in number. One service recently introduced is the 10¢ BUS FARE for anyone 65 and over. This service enables elderly persons to ride any Dallas Transit Bus at any time for only a dime. (There will be an additional 5¢ charge for transfers, and no zone fares charged.) The only requirements are that the senior citizen be 65 years of age

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*Data taken from survey conducted in July, 1973 by the Dallas Agency on Aging.

or older and purchase an identifying Dallas Transit System Senior Citizen card for $1.00.

Other services provided by the Dallas Transit System are DIAL-A-TRIP which allows buses to reroute on request (a very limited service); and OMNI-BUS which takes groups of senior citizens on ½ day trips to places of special interest at the cost of $1.00 per person.

In conclusion, it is important to note that in regard to the transportation services provided in Dallas County, the need, except for South Dallas is barely met. Futhermore, transportation services will vary depending upon area locations and area resources. Therefore it is recommended that all areas in the state of Texas should properly evaluate the transportation system in their own communities as a preface to effective planning for continuing education of the elderly.

Assessment of Formal and Non-Formal Types of Education

Assessment of Formal Types of Education:

The range and variety of formal educational activities for older persons is almost as great as those for the young. Increasing numbers of senior citizens are returning to schools in an attempt to enrich their lives. By observing enrollment rates of elderly persons participating in learning programs centered at community colleges, statistics reveal that the desire is present to broaden learning abilities. (The College of the Mainland in Texas City is a good example of a community college

with a high elderly enrollment rate.) At present, the Community College is the best-equipped institution for meeting the needs of the elderly. This is demonstrated by the fact that the community service idea is based on serving people of all ages in terms of needs and preferences. More important the Community College can serve as a moving force for reintegrating the elderly into community life. In addition, senior citizens can use the learning opportunities provided by the college to establish contact with both young and older adults through an exchange of ideas and experiences.

The Community College is basically considered as being educational in nature and is significant in that it can offer courses specifically designed for older persons. (These courses are not only informational in content, but they enhance social and intellectual growth, as well as developing basic vocational and specific skills.)

The Community College as a comprehensive institution does offer a wide spectrum of potential services to the communities which it serves. Moreover, the college could increase its' effectiveness by working together with existing community agencies for the purpose of defining and developing new and better services for the elderly.

In addition to community colleges, university extension programs in cooperation with their gerontology institutes have recently directed their attention to activity in the field of education. "However in case

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*American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Aging as A Priority for Community Colleges (Draft 9/14/73), Pg. (IV)12-13.

**Richard Feller, The Community College as a Vehicle for the Delivery of Services to the Elderly.

of both the institutes of gerontology and the extension services, it is safe to conclude that education for the most part has not become a major thrust in the universities agenda on aging.*"

In contrast to universities, the public school system is viewed as a possible source for services to the elderly. In many areas throughout the state of Texas, Adult Basic Education programs are effectively conducted in the school system. Moe important in rural areas, public schools would be the most consistently available location for offering courses to the elderly.

Informal Types of Education:

Informal types of education are important in that many senior citizens prefer this type of education. Principal locations would include churches, schools and community centers.

The success of this form of education depends largely on the fact that many elderly people feel more at ease in their community center. Also it is more convenient for them to go to their nearest center because many of them do not have transportation to other institutions.

The senior citizen multi-purpose center is another effective vehicle for promoting and providing education in an informal way. It often provides a casual, informal climate for the development of friendly personal relations and at the same time, provides for information and counseling on such problems as social security and medicare.* In

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*Quoted from Dr. Howard Y. McClusky Ph.d. in the Background and Issues on Education - 1971 White House Conference on Aging.

summation, informal types of education are most effective in promoting education among the aged.

Continuing Education Programs in Other States

1. North Hennepin State Junior College (Minnesota):

   Through the North Hennepin Community Service Department, senior citizens aged 55 years or older are offered a variety of courses on a tuiton-free basis. (Such courses include: Basics in Reading and Writing; Public Speaking; GED classes and tests for High School equivalency diplomas.) Transportation is provided by college buses and by carpools.

2. Catonsville Community College (Maryland):

   Catonsville Community College through a Title III grant of the Older Americans Act in cooperation with the Maryland State Commission on Aging, offers a variety of courses to those senior citizens aged 55 years of age or older. Most programs are offered at no cost while few require a small registration fee. (Programs include Health Seminars; Pre-Retirement Planning; Safety in the Home, etc...)

3. New York City Community College (New York):

   Senior Citizens are offered courses in Race Ethnic Relations, Afro-American History, Urban Ecology, etc... The College also offers courses in senior citizen community centers and homes for the aged within the community.

4. Community College of Allegheny County (Pennsylvania):

   The Community College of Allegheny County in cooperation with the local Foster Grandparent program offers credit courses in Sociology and Child Development to 58 foster grandparent participants. These courses are designed to gain insight into the institutionalized handicapped children. Courses are offered at a local home for crippled children and a home for retarded children.

Continuing Education Programs
in Texas

1. College of the Mainland:

The College of the Mainland in Texas City has one of the most extensive programs for continuing education of the elderly in Texas.

This program was made available through Title III funds of the Older Americans Act in cooperation with the Governor's Committee on Aging. These funds provided for the creation of a Senior Citizens Theatre production; Senior Citizens Counseling Service; Telephone Reassurance System; a newsletter and a Senior Citizen Resource Center.

In addition the college offers classes to senior citizens free-of-charge, and with the purchase of a senior citizen identification card ($2.50/year) senior citizens may take any General Adult non-credit course for ½ the regular tuition fee.

Arts and Crafts, Ceramics, Rapid Reading, Basic Sewing, Physical Fitness, Nutrition Education, Gardening and Woodshop are examples of the types of classes offered free.

2. Southern Methodist University School of Continuing Education:

S.M.U. offers informal courses (lectures, seminars, and workshops) on the college level. These courses are non-credit and are offered primarily at the college campus. Such topics of interest to older adults include Preretirement Counseling, Defensive Driving, Law, Foreign Language, etc... Fees depend upon the particular class.

3. Center for Studies in Aging
North Texas State University:

Provides long-term training leading to a Masters Degree in the field of aging. In addition, the center sponsors short-term programs or seminars for practioners in the aging field. It also develops and evaluates continuing education programs and engages in research.

4. Paris County Junior College:

Through the community relations department, a Retired Senior Volunteer Program has been developed. It is based at the college and area served includes Fannin, Lamar, Delta, and Red River Counties.

The college not only provides outlets whereby senior citizens may continue learning, but it fulfills the service aspect in that retired persons have the opportunity to serve in meaningful roles. This program is beneficial to senior citizens from the viewpoint that they maintain their feeling of usefulness to themselves and to their community.

5. Henderson County Junior College:

Offers non-credit courses to students of all ages. Courses in Conversational Spanish, Real Estate Principles and Practices, and Defensive Driving showed the greatest number of older students- 23 between the ages of 55-65 and 2 aged 65 and older. (Based on the Fall-1973 semester.)

6. San Antonio Junior College:

San Antonio Junior College is currently in the process of formulating plans for a continuing education program to meet the needs of senior citizens in the San Antonio area.

7. Texas Agriculture Extension Service:

The Texas Agriculture Extension Service conducts educational programs related to the older adult as a part of the overall Extension program. This program is developed in the county through the County Program Building Committee. In counties that designate aging as a concern a committee in aging functions as a sub-committee of the County Program Building Committee.

The Aging Committee is composed of local lay leaders representative of all areas of the County and all segments of the population. A local County Extension Agent serves as advisor to this group in determining th local situation related to the older adult, then developing programs and activities that will help to solve the identified problems.

At present, there are 152 county committees on aging planning and carrying out such programs in Texas. The programs vary widely. Some examples include activity programs such as bazaars, fairs, fun days, etc., volunteer transportation services, volunteer telephone reassurance programs, activity centers, educational seminars and recognition days.

Presentation of Questionnaire Findings

A questionnaire on educational needs was designed to gain input from various groups of senior citizens representative of the total elderly population of Dallas County. This information will be used to facilitate the documentation of educational needs and validate directions for the proposed plan of continuing education of the elderly within the state of Texas.

Information was taken from a sample number of persons 55 years of age or older who represent Dallas County according to geographic location; economic representation; and racial distribution.

In selecting sample groups, participants were those senior citizens residing in the Dallas Housing Authority high rise apartments for elderly persons and those participating in Dallas County Nutrition Programs. In addition, members of the Marillac Social Center (Senior Citizens Program) and the North Dallas Chapter #473 of the American Association of Retired Persons were interviewed.

The questionnaire included 24 questions about educational needs and interests. Specific goals of the questionnaire were:

1. To determine major areas of educational interest.
2. To determine the number of elderly persons who wish to further their learning.
3. To determine to what extent current educational opportunities are being utilized.
4. To identify reasons why some elderly persons do not participate in educational activities.
5. To determine the best ways to meet the needs.
6. To determine the number of elderly able to pay for educational classes.

Out of 950 questionnaires distributed, 365 were completed. Results indicated that 79(22%) of all participants interviewed were males, whereas 286 or (78%) were females.

The racial distribution of respondents approximated closely their representativeness in the population. The highest number of questionnaire

were completed by whites 274(75%), and they represented Brooks Manor, Hospitality House, and the North Dallas Chapter of AARP.

Approximately 65(18%) forms were completed by blacks residing at Park Manor and those participating in the Nutrition Program.

Seven per cent (25) questionnaires were completed by Mexican-Americans from the Marillac Social Center in West Dallas.

In Table 2, Racial distribution is compared to the highest grade attained in school by all participants. In regard to race, minority groups are among the least educated; therefore, the purpose of this comparision is to support this fact.

Table 4. The Relationship of Race to the Highest Grade Attained in School

	Years of Formal Education Completed					
Site	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	Some College	College Graduate
(W) AARP	---	1	1	28	41	38
(W) Brooks M.	2	2	17	20	7	1
(W) H.H.	---	3	7	24	15	12
(M) N.S.	4	14	16	10	---	---
(M) Marillac	6	5	2	1	---	---
(M) Park M.	2	5	9	5	4	---
Totals	14	30	52	88	67	51
%	5%	10%	17%	29%	22%	17%

(W) - White Participants
(M) - Minority Participants

Evidence concludes that in the predominately white location sites, the majority of participants graduated from High School with a large number entering college (51). While on the otherhand, centers in low-income minority areas indicated that few participants were able to reach even the 9th. grade. Therefore, it is recommended that in the proposed plan for continuing education of the elderly, special efforts should be made

to entice minority groups to actively participate in activities which would enrich their personal lives.

Questionnaire results indicate that 46% of all age group participants were between the ages of 61-70. Income response indicated that 50% of all participants interviewed had a monthly income ranging between $100-$199/month. (This data was computed after excluding the participants from AARP - Most of these participants had a monthly income ranging between $400 and over per month.)

Most participants interviewed lived alone (54%,) and the next highest category were those persons still living with their spouses (32%).

63% out of 297 responses indicated an interest in continued learning. 51% of those interviewed were participating in educational activities while 49% were not. Of those not participating the reasons were given as follows:

1. 32% felt that it was too late to continue their learning.
2. 29% were unaware that some classes were available in their particular center.
3. 15% were not interested in learning.
4. 24% had other reasons for not participating.

In summation, the majority of those interviewed:

A. Preferred to attend classes once per week (66%).
B. Preferred to attend classes in their local community center (81%).
C. Preferred to attend classes with persons of younger ages (74%).
D. The majority kept informed of the news by reading the paper; watching tv; and by listening to the radio (74%).

E. The majority of participants enjoyed learning (38%)
F. The majority of participants felt that Preretirement education programs would have helped in planning for their retirement (70%).
G. The majority wished to have a broader outlook on life at the completion of their instruction (45%).
H. Excluding AARP, the majority of participants felt that the $10.00 fee would prohibit them from participating in educational activities (64%).

Note: For complete observation of questionnaire results, see: Appendage

Plan Proposals for Educational Alternatives for Senior Citizens

As a component to area-wide plans for services to the elderly, the proposed plan: Educational Alternatives for Senior Citizens would assist area agencies in achieving their three main goals*:

1. To assist the elderly in maintaining their independence and involvement in the stream of life...

   The Community College plans to offer a variety of courses designed and directed toward meeting specific needs of the elderly. By creating learning opportunities, outlets for creativity, as well as skill development, elderly persons will not only increase their potential for purposeful living, but will maintain self-independence.

   In addition the community college plans to offer courses for the elderly on campus and in community settings. For the senior citizen this would have a double advantage. First, it would promote an increase in social contact among each individual and his fellow peers and provide the opportunity to jump back into the mainstream of community activities. Second, programs offered in convenient community settings would lessen the barrier of transportation.

2. To maximize support to the elderly by providing the planning and coordination that will facilitate the delivery of services by private agencies, governmental units and volunteer

*Goals as listed in the Area Wide Plan for Services to the Elderly-Dallas Area Agency on Aging (November 20, 1973).

organizations...

It is recommended that services for senior citizens, to be delivered by the local college or college district, should be analyzed and developed in conjunction with existing agencies. Depending on the nature of the community to be served, the community college district plans to act as a catalyst in assisting such agencies to maximize their impact on educational programs for the elderly. More important by determining the type of services offered by existing agencies, the college district would attempt to alleviate duplication.

Agency representatives would be utilized as instructors for different courses to be offered to the elderly. (For example: Social Security Representatives) In this way, the Dallas County Community College District will strive to assist existing agencies in the promotion of their services to senior citizens throughout Dallas County.

3. To develop plans and mean for the implementation of programs and services not presently being provided...

As an educational institution it has the proper type of resources needed for developing direct learning services for the elderly. Such resources would include qualified experience instructors; adequate classroom facilities (for those persons desiring to participate in learning activities conducted on the college campus); library priveledges; an interesting selection of existing courses; the flexibility to design courses specifically for the elderly and through the division of continuing education, an effective delivery system.

In addition to assisting area agencies, the Dallas County Community College District recommends that the plan for continuing education of the elderly be comprised of six essential proposals. These being:

Proposal #1

It is recommended that courses directed toward the elderly be administered by schools of continuing education. (These schools shall include universities, community colleges, junior colleges, etc...) By offering courses on the college campus, this would have the advantage of

encouraging the elderly into the community and reaquainting them to community activities.

In addition to offering courses of interest to senior citizens in schools of continuing education, it is proposed that certain courses be offered in community settings. Locations would be in churches, schools, community centers, or wherever there has been an expressed desire and need. (Questionnaire findings indicated that approximately 81% of the elderly persons interviewed in Dallas County preferred to attend classes in their local community.)

According to the 1970 Census, there are approximately 131,919 persons aged 60 and over living within Dallas County. The Dallas County Community College District feels an obligation to serving this segment of the population, and it is felt that they are entitled to the best possible educational services.

Proposal #2

It is recommended that the local college or college district designate a person who would serve as fulltime director and coordinator of all programs directed toward the elderly. By placing the responsibility for aging activities in the hands of a qualified director, the elderly would be looked upon as a college priority and therefore be assured of a direct line of communication to the college.

In addition, if responsibilities for aging activities is placed with the director, then that person could utilize college resources - both staff and material to develop an effectively coordinated multi-purpose program for senior citizens.* (This program would be in the Continuing Education Division of the college.)

Proposal #3

It is proposed that the local college(district) be responsible for the creation of a Senior Advisory Council. This council would assist in the planning format of all activities offered to the elderly and for evaluating what type of courses should be offered to older adults. In addition, the council would be used as a referral agent in that the older members of the council could inform elderly community residents of the college services available to meet their specific needs.

It is recommended that the size of the council would not exceed the number fifteen, and have at least 8 elderly persons, the consumer group, reflected in the count. The rest of the council members would be comprised of community leaders. (Example: Area Agency Task Force Members.)

Proposal #4

It is proposed to offer any community service course in any area

*American Association of Community & Junior Colleges, Aging as a Priority for Community Colleges (9/14/73), pg. (IV)-28.

for which there may be a demand. Suggested curriculm would include Arts and Crafts, Nutrition and Health Care, Consumer Education, Pre-retirement Education, Physical Fitness, recreation, courses on Old Age benefits, Social Security, etc...

It is further recommended that these courses be offered either in the morning or afternoon (depending on personal preference) and would last between 1hr. to 1½hr. in duration and only one day per week.

In addition, no discrimination will be made in regard to race, color, creed, or sex in planning and conducting the continuing education program for senior citizens in Dallas County.

In regard to age, 55 should be the entry age in order to prepare for retirement.

Proposal #5

It is proposed that the identification and securing of instructors would be the responsibility of the Program Director. These instructors should be capable of exercising mature judgement and understanding the needs of the elderly.

Some instructors will be able to be obtained at no cost. For example, these instructors would be social security representatives, physicians, lawyers, and more important, qualified retired citizens. (It is hoped that the numerous services provided by retired citizens would be utilized in as many courses and ways as possible.) Other instructors would have to be paid at the rate of $10.00/hour - based

on hiring rates of the Dallas County Community College District. -(or at the approved rate of the individual college and/or district.)

It is recommended that all courses and instructors be continually evaluated by qualified supervisors so that the program will maintain a high level of effectiveness. In addition, it is suggested that the proposed program be evaluated at the end of its session by all senior citizen participants of the class to insure maintaining quality control.

Futhermore, the Senior Advisory Council should play an active role in evaluating courses and instructors.

Proposal #6
Funding the Plan

At the present time, there are no existing grants or state funds designated to fund: Educational Alternatives for Senior Citizens.

It is therefore the recommendation of the Dallas County Community College District that the cost of these proposed activities should be funded in a manner similar to Adult Vocational Education provided by the Texas Education Agency.

The Dallas County Community College District further recommends that the proposed plan be funded from 3 distinct sources. These being:

1. The individual student
2. The local college or college district
3. The State of Texas

I. The Individual Student:

It is recommended that the share of the cost to the student shall be minimal to encourage participation. (64% (excluding AARP respondents) of the senior citizens interviewed in the Dallas County area indicated that the paying of a $10.00 class registration fee would prohibit them from participating in any educational activity.) This increased participation in a course would result in a decreased cost rate to individual students, given a standard cost of providing courses.

It is recommended that if a senior citizen desired to take a course on any topic, his share of the cost would be:

A. 10 Hour Course - $1.00 fee

B. Courses over 10 hours - $2.00 fee

Furthermore, scholarships could be made available to senior citizens through the college or community groups.

II. Local College District or College:

It is proposed that the local college district or college would be responsible for three things:

1. Administrative Costs
2. Overhead Costs
3. Facilities
4. Free Registration on Space Available Basis

1. Administrative Costs:

It is felt that the local college district or college should bear the responsibility for all administrative costs. Under this category, the following items would be included:

A. Director's Salary

B. 1/2 Secretary Salary

2. Overhead Costs:

Under this category, the college district or college would be responsible for providing the following things:

A. All utility costs - electricity, telephone, etc.

B. Janitorial costs at the campus

3. Facilities:

It is recommended that the college district or college be responsible for the cost of locating adequate classroom space* and for the administration of the classes.

In addition, the college district would be responsible for office space for the director and secretary.

4. Free Registration on Space Available Basis:

It is recommended that the local college district or college explore the means by which senior citizens may enroll in credit and non-credit classes tuition free on a space available basis.

III. State Responsibilities:

This proposal recommends that the state reimburse each college or college district $1.20 per student contact hour for any course offered to the elderly. (Elderly persons in Dallas County may be defined as persons aged 60 and over.)

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*Space includes use of any suitable facility. This includes churches, schools, community centers, etc. . .

This state reimbursement would cover:

A. All direct instructional costs:

1. Instructors salaries
2. Travel Allowance
3. Supplies
4. Equipment

B. Indirect costs

Example of Calculations:

College:

20 hrs. x $10(Instructor Fee)	= $200.00
$200 x 15% Overhead	+ 30.00
College cost	$230.00
Money to be applied to Program Director's Salary	+ 10.00
	$240.00

State:

$1.20 x 20 hrs.	$24.00
$24.00 x $10 (Instructor fee/hr.)	$240.00
State Reimbursement.....	$240.00
Minus cost to college.....	230.00
Remainder toward Program Director's Salary.....	$ 10.00

Summary

By implementing the proposed plan for continuing education of the elderly, the Dallas County Community College District plans to challenge the issues. This plan will not only provide senior citizens with opportunities for training, learning experiences, and achievement of personal goals, but it will also provide alternative roles for the retired elderly.

Elderly persons will be afforded the opportunity to communicate with other persons and be a more active member of his community. Classes held in informal atmospheres will provide a forum for senior citizens to meet new people and express new ideas and viewpoints, thus fulfilling their socialization needs.

APPENDAGE

RESULTS OF SENIOR CITIZEN EDUCATIONAL NEEDS STUDY

Total number of distributed questionnaires: 950

Total number of returned questionnaires: 365

1. Sex:

   Males - 79 (21.6%)
   Females - 286 (78.35%)

2. Ethnic origin:

   Whites - 274 (75%)
   Blacks - 65 (18%)
   Mexicans - 25 (7%)
   Other - none

3. Age:

   55-60 - 26 (7.8%)
   61-70 - 167 (46.6%)
   71-75 - 99 (27.6%)
   76-80 - 39 (10.8%)
   80 and over - 25 (6.9%)

4. Income distribution:

   Less than $100 per month - 26 (8%)
   $100 to $199 per month - 114 (34%)
   $200 to $299 per month - 49 (15%)
   $300 to $399 per month - 27 (8%)
   $400 per month and over - 118 (35%)

5. Living situation:

   with your husband or wife - 116 (32%)
   with family relatives (example: sister) - 39 (11%)
   alone - 194 (54%)
   with an unrelated person - 10 (3%)

6. Transportation method:

   Walk if it is not too far away - 53 (12%)
   Drive the car - 206 (48%)
   Call friends or relatives, and they take you in their car - 67 (16%)
   Ride the bus - 102 (24%)

7. Highest grade completed in school:

1-3 grade - 14 (4%)
4-6 " - 30 (10%)
7-9 " - 62 (20%)
10-12 " - 88 (28%)
Some college - 67 (21%)
College graduate - 51 (16%)

8. Response to interest in learning on a part-time basis:

Yes - 186 (63%)
No - 111 (37%)

9. Response to present participation in educational activities (classes):

Yes - 165 (51%)
No - 160 (49%)

*Reasons for nonparticipation:

There are no activities offered in which you are interested.-14 (15%
You feel that it is too late to start learning now. - 31 (32%)
You did not know that classes were being offered. - 28 (29%)
Other - 23 (24%)

10. Present class participation of participants:

Art - 41 (15%)
Bible - 66 (24%)
Nutrition - 19 (7%)
Language - 15 (5%)
Sewing - 34 (12%)
Physical Fitness - 19 (7%)
Adult Education - 23 (8%)
Bridge - 36 (13%)
Other - 25 (9%)

MOST POPULAR CLASSES:
1. Bible
2. Art
3. Bridge
4. Sewing
5. Other

11. Response to interest in participation in the following classes:

Basics in Reading & Writing - 33 (11%)
Art - 31 (10%)
Physical Fitness - 41 (13%)
Spanish - 32 (10%)
English - 23 (7%)
Creative Writing - 10 (3%)
Consumer Education - 22 (7%)
Seminars on State and National Programs affecting Senior Citizens - 47 (15%)
Psychology for Everyday Living - 47 (15%)
Other - 16 (5%)

MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES:
1. Seminars & Psychology
2. Physical Fitness
3. Basics in Reading & Writing
4. Spanish & Art
5. English & Consumer Education

12. Senior citizens preferred that short-term educational classes meet:

Once per week - 144 (66%)
Twice per week - 49 (22%)
Three times per week - 25 (11%)

13. Participants preferred to attend classes at:

their nearest community center - 175 (81%)
their nearest college campus - 27 (12%)
both - 15 (7%)

14. Response to interest in attending classes with persons of other ages:

Yes - 188 (74%)
No - 65 (27%)

15. Reply to interest in attending informative lectures on current events:

Yes - 211 (76%)
No - 67 (24%)

16. Respondents keep informed of news events in the following manner:

Read the newspaper - 71 (17%)
Watch television - 99 (24%)
Listen to the radio - 35 (8%)
All of the above - 213 (51%)

17. Reasons why respondents desired to learn more:

For certain reasons, they did not have the chance to learn when they were young, - 55 (14%)
They enjoy learning about new things. - 148 (38%)
The more education they have, the better the chances are for living a longer and more productive life. - 62 (16%)
They feel that it is never too late to learn. - 109 (28%)
Other - 7 (2%)
All - 12 (3%)

18. A. Are senior citizens in great need of legal services?

Yes - 280 (92%)
No - 23 (8%)

B. Response to interest in taking a course entitled: "When and How to See a Lawyer - Wills, Legacies, and trusts:"

Yes - 164 (61%)
No - 103 (38%)

19. A. Are senior citizens (individuals) taking advantage of Health Programs when offered at their centers?

Yes - 200 (67%)
No - 97 (33%)

19. B. Reply to interest in taking a course on Health Education:

Yes - 145 (57%)
No - 109 (43%)

20. Recreational activities preferred:

Bowling - 29	Checkers - 20	Picnics - 82
Bridge - 90	Dancing - 84	Parties - 76
Billiards - 9	Dominoes - 65	Singing - 90
Basket Making - 20	Group Games - 34	Swimming - 17
Book Reviews - 81	Gardening - 64	Tours - 129
Bingo - 144	Handicrafts - 40	Trips - 123
Ceramics - 32	Knitting - 50	Woodcraft - 19
Crocheting - 69	Movies - 65	Other - 5

Top 10 Recreational Activities:

1. Bingo
2. Tours
3. Trips
4. Singing & Bridge
5. Dancing
6. Picnics
7. Book Reviews
8. Parties
9. Crochet
10. Dominoes & Movies

21. Topics which respondents would like to see included in a course on Nutrition Education:

The relationship between food and health - 85 (29%)
High nutrition, low cost foods - 73 (25%)
How to shop and cook for a one or two person family - 97 (33%)
Your dentures and food - 18 (6%)
All - 17 (6%)

22. Would payment of a $10.00 class registration fee be a barrier to participation in educational activities?

Yes - 111 (45%)
No - 137 (55%)

Note: If AARP members were to be excluded, this is the results:

Yes - 98 (64%)
No - 54 (35%)

23. Would programs on preretirement education help in planning for retirement?

Yes - 164 (70%)
No - 70 (30%)

24. Respondents hoped to gain the following from participation in educational classes?

New friends - 155 (38%)
A broader outlook on life - 185 (45%)
A chance to speak up and be heard - 56 (14%)
Other - 16 (4%)